



## Fancy Sheep in the Zoo

### *The Aoudad Family*

By MARY GRAHAM BONNER

"THE Aoudad children always come in the spring," whispered Mother Aoudad to her young ones. "You always come late in February or early in March. Now the zebu children, who belong to the wild cattle family of India, come any old time at all. One may arrive late in the spring or even in the fall."

"But then the zebras aren't nearly as fine as we are."

And only one zebu arrives at a time, as a rule. Think of having only one child arrive at a time! I can't think of it, for I always have two precious aoudads at once."

"Haven't the zebu children ever any twin brothers or sisters?" asked one of the aoudad children.

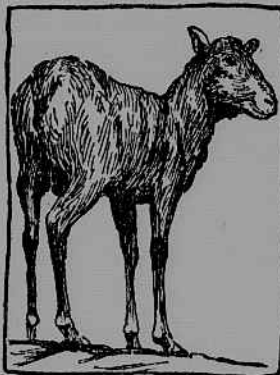
"There are a few who have, but it doesn't often happen," answered Mother Aoudad.

Now the aoudads were wild mountain sheep and they had a very bad reputation in the zoo for being cross, although they were beautiful with their long manes of wool and their handsome horns.

"Children," said their mother, "I must tell you some of the ways of aoudads. You, my daughter, must always

let your brothers and your fathers eat first. If you don't let them, they will shove you aside and do it anyway. And, daughter, remember we are one of the few animal families whose daughters and mothers are more gentle than the fathers and brothers. The lioness is wilder than the lion, the tigress is wilder than the tiger, but Mrs. Aoudad is gentle and tame compared to Mr. Aoudad, who has everything his own way, always.

"My son will be like that, and my daughter will be gentle and will put up with it. But none of us complain of the weather, though it is so different from the hot, dry climate of Northern Africa, where our family lives. Such are the ways of aoudads, my two young children."



## *Handsome Mr. Arcal Mountain Sheep*

"IT IS quite sad," said Mrs. Arcal Mountain Sheep, "to see a creature all the time who is so much more handsome than one's self. One looks at the creature and says, 'Ah, how lovely!' And then one looks at one's self in a pool of water and says, 'Ah, how different! Not lovely at all!'"

"Why are you talking in this way?" asked Mr. Arcal Mountain Sheep. "I suppose you are saying that because you think I am more beautiful than you are."

"Well," said Mrs. Arcal Mountain Sheep, "you are. You are so small and dainty. You have such beautiful,

big, curved horns, and your hair hangs so lengthily and gorgeously and magnificently."

"Gracious," said Mr. Arcal Mountain Sheep, "you pay my hair a great compliment when you say so much about it and use such long and mighty words."

"Your hair deserves long and mighty words," said Mrs. Arcal Mountain Sheep.

"But please do not feel discouraged about your own looks," said Mr. Arcal Mountain Sheep. "You know, I thought you were a lovely creature when I saw you back

in India, and I haven't changed my mind about you here in the Zoo."

"Oh, is that so?" asked Mrs. Arcal Mountain Sheep. "Well, I won't feel discouraged or sad any more, but I will be glad and proud that you think so well of me, and I will simply enjoy your particularly good looks, for, after all, it is a great pleasure to be the mate of a beautiful creature."

But Mr. Arcal Mountain Sheep was making a low bow and saying, "Just what I think, my dear."

